Sponsored Schemes for development of school education by the Centre and to universities and colleges for development of higher education by the University Grants Commission are available in the Annual Reports of the Ministry and University Grants Commission for various years.

(b) The details of achievements made by the States in terms of number of educational institutions, their enrolment, literacy etc. are available in the Annual Reports of the Ministry and the University Grants Commission for various years.

(c) and (d) No specific complaint has been received.

Inflow of Girls from Nepal

3755. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that about three lakh girls had come to India, till date from Nepal and adopted prostitution;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to stop such inflow of girls from Nepal; and

(c) whether any rehabilitation programme is envisaged for these girls in distress?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) No, Sir. There are no reliable statistics available about the number of girls who have come to India, from Nepal and adopted prostitution.

(b) A decision has been taken to appoint officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation as Trafficking Police Officers under Section 13(4) of the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act for the purpose of investigating and tackling trafficking.

(c) Government has opened Short Stay Homes and Juvenile Homes for, among other purposes, the protection and rehabilitation of persons rescued from prostitution, Medical check ups and counselling services are provided in these homes. Training-cum-income generating projects are implemented both by Government and NGOs to rehabilitate the rescued persons and provide alternative income sources to them.

Sea Links to Latin American Countries

3756. SHRI JAGATVIR SINGH DRONA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are exploring the possibilities of establishing sea links with Latin American Countries through South Africa; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b). The Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), a public sector undertaking has entered into a joint service agreement with Zim Israel Navigation Company Ltd. in July, 1996. By this arrangement, SCI has commenced its container service for Ports in South American Countries with transhipment at Barcelona in Spain.

Inland Water Transport Policy

3757. SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the Government's policy on inland water transport;

(b) the number of commercial routes in operation in the country at present; and

(c) the policy in regard to commissioning of new commercial routes?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) As per recommendations of National Transport Policy Committee (1980), Inland Waterways Authority of India which is a statutory body, was set up in October, 1986 to regulate and develop the National Waterways in the country. So far three waterways namely National Waterway 1, 2 and 3, have been declared as National Waterways and various developmental works on these waterways are being undertaken by the Authority. Action for declaration of more waterways as National Waterways is also in progress.

(b) Presently the following routes in the National Waterways are operational:—

(i) The National Waterway No. 1 from Haldia to Patna (1020 kms).

(ii) The National Waterway No. 2 from Dhubri to Dibrugarh (788 kms).

(iii) The Champakara Canal (14 kms), the Udyogmandal Canal (23 kms) and the Kochi-Edepallykota (122 kms) sections of National Waterway-3.

(iv) International route through Bangladesh between Calcutta/Haldia and Dhubri/Pandu in river Brahmaputra and Karimganj in river Baraka (Assam).

Besides, the river Mandovi and Zuari in Goa are operational as active commercial IWT routes.

(c) As stated in reply to part (a) of the Question, action for declaring more waterways as National Waterways is in progress. The future National Waterways as well as the remaining stretches of the existing waterways are proposed